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➤ JUNE 26, 1889. ➤



Odysseus



By MAX BRUCH.



ODYSSEUS—MR. GEORG PREHN.

PENELOPE—MISS HATTIE CLAPPER.

OBERLIN MUSICAL UNION.

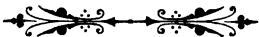


COMMENCEMENT CONCERT.

THIRTY-SECOND SEASON.



First Church, Wednesday, June 26, 1889,



SOLOISTS.

MISS HATTIE CLAPPER, of New York, CONTRALTO.

MISS ADELE MATTHEWS, SOPRANO.

MISS GRACE WRIGHT, SOPRANO.

MR. GEORG PREHN, of Berlin, BARITONE.

MR. G. LEGRAND SMITH, BARITONE.

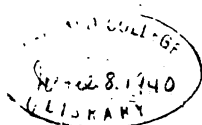
MR. GEO. B. SIDDALL, TENOR.



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Relation to the Odyssey.

The *Odysseus* follows the story of Homer's *Odyssey* quite closely, with the exception of a single change in the order of events. As all students of Homer will remember, the action of the *Odyssey* occupies only the last six weeks of the ten years' wanderings of Odysseus, and all his adventures prior to that time are simply related by him as reminiscences. The *Odysseus* begins at the same period of time, the last six weeks, but in order to heighten the effect the striking and familiar scenes of the descent into Hades and the adventure with the Sirens are introduced, although in the *Odyssey* they happen many years before he reaches the Isle of Kalypso, where the poem opens. According to Homer the adventures of Odysseus after leaving Troy on his homeward journey were as follows:

1. A storm drives his ship to the land of the *Lotus Eaters*, whose food has the effect of causing forgetfulness.—[*Bk. ix.*]
2. Escaping from the seductions of these, he reaches the country of the *Cyclops*, where he has the well known adventure with *Polephemus*.—[*Bk. ix.*]
4. He visits the Isle of *Æolus* and is presented with all the winds confined in a bag. These escape and cause much trouble.—[*Bk. x.*]
4. He falls in with the cannibal *Læstrigians*, who devour most of his men.—[*Bk. x.*]
5. With one remaining ship he escapes to the isle of the enchantress *Circe*, who transforms part of his crew to swine. He rescues them by the help of *Hermes*, and remains with *Circe* a year.—[*Bk. x.*]
6. To learn the homeward way, he visits *Hades* and consults the seer *Teiresias*, who warns him of dangers to come.—[*Bk. xi.*]
7. He passes the Isle of the *Sirens*, but escapes through the advice of *Circe*.—[*Bk. xii.*]
8. He encounters *Scylla and Charybdis*, and six of his crew are devoured.—[*Bk. xii.*]
9. He reaches *Thrinacia, the Isle of the Sun*, where his men slay the sacred cattle, in consequence of which the gods send storm and shipwreck.—[*Bk. xii.*]
10. Odysseus alone escapes, and makes his way to the isle of the nymph *Kalypso*, where he is detained, an unwilling lover, for eight years.—[*Bk. xii.*]

In the eighth year of his captivity the poem opens, with the preparations made for his return. And here the *Odysseus* also begins. The foregoing adventures are narrated by Odysseus to King *Alkinoos*, and are all omitted in the *Odyssey*, with the exception of the scene in *Hades* and the rencontre with the *Sirens*, which are introduced into the action of the play.

Argument.

PART I.

I. A chorus of the nymphs of Kalypso appears and complains to Hermes that Odysseus is detained against his will. Their prayer is heard, and Hermes appears to announce to Odysseus a speedy return.—[*Bk. i.*]

II. Odysseus and his Companions visit Hades to learn the course of their returning voyage from the prophet Teiresias. Teiresias warns Odysseus against the Sirens, and his mother Antikleia urges him to hasten home to defend his wife against her importunate suitors.—[*Bk. xi.*]

III. They pass the Isle of the Sirens. Odysseus fills the ears of his companions with wax and has them bind him to the mast, and thus listens to their song in safety.—[*Bk. xii.*]

IV. A tempest wrecks their ship and Odysseus alone is saved by the intervention of the sea goddess, Leukothea, and is cast on the shore of Scheria, the home of the Phæacians, where we leave him asleep.—[*Bk. v.*]

PART II.

V. The scene changes to Ithaca, where Penelope is mourning for the absence of her husband and son Telemachus, and prays for their return.—[*Bk. ii.*]

VI. The scene changes back to Scheira, where Nausikaa, daughter of the king, goes down to the beach and finds Odysseus and invites him, ignorant of his rank, to her father's house.—[*Bk. vi.*]

VII. A chorus of Phæacians welcomes Odysseus to the feast, and the Rhapsodies or Improvisatores sing the fall of Troy, and the fate of the Grecian chiefs. Odysseus, overcome with emotion, sheds tears, and is recognized and sent to his home in a Phæacian ship.—[*Bk. viii.*]

VIII. The scene changes once more to Ithaca, where Penelope is weaving a garment, upon the completion of which she is to accept a new husband. Every night she unravels what she has woven during the day.—[*Bk. ii.*]

IX. The Phæacian boatmen land Odysseus on the Island of Ithaca, and leave him wrapped in slumber. He wakes, but fails to recognize his country until Athene appears and gives him advice as to how he shall slay the insolent suitors.—[*Bk. xiii.*]

X. The final scene introduces us to a feast in Ithaca. The people rejoice over the return of Odysseus, and describe how he slew the suitors, and the work ends with a grand triumphal chorus by the Ithacan people.—[*Bks. xxi-xxiv.*]

Dramatis Personæ.

Odysseus, Ulysses, King of Ithaca.....Mr. Georg Prehn.
 Alkinoos, King of the Phæacians.....Mr. G. LeGrand Smith.
 Teiresias, a Theban Soothsayer in Hades.....Mr. G. LeGrand Smith.
 A Helmsman of the Phæacian Ship.....Mr. Georg Prehn.

Penelope, Wife of Odysseus, Queen of Ithaca.....Miss Hattie Clapper.
 Antikleia, Mother of Odysseus, in Hades.....Miss Hattie Clapper.
 Nausikaa, Daughter of Alkinoos. Miss G. L. Wright.
 Arete, Wife of Alkinoos. Miss Hattie Clapper.

Pallas Athene [Minerva, Atrytona], a Goddess.....Miss Adele Matthews.
 Hermes [Mercury], a God.....Mr. Geo. B. Siddall.
 Leukothea, formerly Ino, now a Sea Goddess.....Miss Adele Matthews.

Chorus of the Nymphs of Kalypso.....Sopranos and Altos.
 Chorus of the Companions of Odysseus.....Tenors and Basses.
 Chorus of Shades in Hades.....All the Voices.
 Chorus of the Shades of Children.....Sopranos.
 Chorus of the Shades of Brides.....Altos.
 Chorus of the Shades of Youths.....Tenors.
 Chorus of the Shades of Old Men.....Basses.
 Chorus of Sirens.....Sopranos and Altos.
 Chorus of Oceanides.....Sopranos and Altos.
 Chorus of the Maidens of Nausikaa.....Sopranos and Altos.
 Chorus of Phæacian Nobles.....All the Voices.
 Chorus of Rhapsodes in the Phæacian Court.....Tenors and Basses.
 Chorus of Phæacian People.....All the Voices.
 Chorus of Phæacian Boatmen.....Eight Male Voices.
 Chorus of Ithacans.....Full Chorus.

SCENE.—First in Ogygia, the Isle of the nymph Kalypso, where Odysseus has been shipwrecked. Afterwards in Hades, then on the Island of Scheria in the Kingdom of the Phæacians, and finally in Ithaca.

ODYSSEUS,*

PART I.

I. Odysseus on Kalypso's Island.

Nymphs.

Here, oh Hermes, in midst of the islet,
Where four fountains their waters translucent
Wreath over meadows enamelled with flowers,
Dwelleth our golden-haired sister Kalypso !

Through her grot spreads a cool purple shadow,
All around twines the full, clustered vine,
Fragrant odors are wafted of myrtle,
Sweet odors are wafted from bowers of myrtle.

But behold, 'neath yon rocky headland,
There sits Odysseus and mourns ;
Looks out toward Ithaca's shores o'er the barren waters ;
Longs for home ; he loves not the fair-haired Kalypso !

Odysseus.

Flow ye tears, since days are hateful !
Break, thou heart, since life is wasted !
Home, thou art of all the treasure,
Who thy dear delights have tasted !

*Translated from the German of Wilhelm Paul Graff by Natalie Macfarren.

Sad to dwell, unblest, unfriended,
 Though mid earthly joy and splendor,
 Far from the sweet ties of kindred,
 Sundered far from consort tender !

Ithaca fairest, thou sunny isle,
 There doth great Neriton skyward soar,
 Uplifting his green forest crown.
 Oh beloved home, shall I see thee no more ?

Penelopeia, thou blissful one,
 Balm in sorrow the vows have proved,
 Which thou when we parted last did'st breathe ;
 Oh, have I lost thee, my wife beloved ?

Hermes.

Mortal, this day thou shalt cease from lamenting,
 Waste thy heart not with sighing.
 The Immortals relent at the sound of thy woes !
 I hither am sent by the father of gods,
 From Kalypso's enchantment thou shalt be saved,
 The ties that restrain thee shall vanish !
 Thy hollow, swift ship thou shalt launch on the water,
 And return to thy home with thy faithful companions !

Odysseus.

Oh Lord of Olympus, thou ruler of gods,
 Who sway'st mortal hearts to obey thy decrees,
 Have thanks, have thanks that thy will is propitious,
 And though some god may devise my doom,
 Upon the shadowy waters,
 My heart shall be proof against fortune !
 Have thanks, have thanks, have thanks !

II. Odysseus in Hades.

The Companions of Odysseus.

The bounds we have reached at last of the deep-flowing ocean ;
 Black yawn dull Erebus' fatal abysses,
 Veiled in gloom of silence and night.
 Never shall far-darting Helios
 Send his beams 'neath the west, dark and distant ;
 Endless night is around us !

Here where loud thundering the flood of Kokytos
 Pours its black wave into Acheron's tide ;
 Here, where rocks pierce high-towering heaven,
 Let us invoke the dim world of shades !

Odysseus (MAKING A SACRIFICE TO THE GODS.)

Hear, and be gracious, mighty lord of shades !
 I pour this blood to the sacred dead ;
 Behold it flow down the dark recess !
 I call thee, thou royal bard of Thebes,
 Teiresias, and thou, my mother, hear !
 Draw near, and let your winged words
 Foretell if yet my home and consort I shall see !

The Companions.

See, oh horror !
 There surging aloft,
 The shadows of the departed !
 They are crowding around the trench to the blood.
 Our hearts are trembling with terror !
 Shield us, oh lord of darkness !

The Shades.

Weep! Weep! Weep!

Who calls the shadows? Who calls the departed,
From restful sleep to sunlight and day?

Blood has lured us from below!

Let us drink while it flows!

The Shades of Children [SOPRANOS.]

Joy and hope shone warm upon us,

Ere life's smiling morn had won us,

Ah! our joys were shorn by remorseless death!

The Shades of Brides [ALTOS.]

Hymen's torch was brightly burning;

All thought of sorrow we were spurning;

Alas, while still our hearts were yearning,

We were embraced by icy cold death!

The Shades of Youths [TENORS.]

We had life that death might slay us,

Soon his touch our strength did blight!

Love nor joy on earth could stay us,

We were doomed to endless night!

The Shades of Old Men [BASSES.]

Long we wearied with sinking faith,

Living we mourned and prayed for death.

But when he came, ah we pined for sweet light!

All the Shades.

Sorrow! Sorrow!

Let us drink of the blood!

Tiresias.

Odysseus, what seek'st thou among the departed?

Is't thy joyful returning?

Have a care lest thou be lured by the Sirens,

Nor draw thou near to their green flowery margin,

Bones of mortals lie white on their plains!

The Companions.

He sinks, he melts in the fathomless gloom!

Look, yonder arises one from the tomb!

Antikleia.

My son, turn and hasten thee homeward!

Thy fond Penelopeia with steadfast heart

Awaits thy returning!

Ah, ah, and thy father, he dwells apart,

Clad in sad garments,

Ceaselessly mourning,

Bowed to the earth, 'tis for thee that he sorrows,

Filling his heart with grief upon grief;

And age lies heavy upon him!

The Companions.

She sinks!

She melts in the gloom!

Odysseus.

Mother, why dost thou fly me?

Oh let my fond hands embrace thee,

Oh let my frozen despair be loosed,

And dissolve my weeping!

The Shades.

Sorrow! Sorrow!

The Companions.

Dread on dread !

Lo, surging aloft

The numberless hosts of departed !

The Shades.

Who calls the shadows, who calls the departed,
From restful sleep to sunlight and day ?

The Companions.

Clamour of woe ! Clamour of woe !

Ah, will the dreadful redresser of wrongs

Send forth dread Gorgo with death-bearing shield !

Our hearts are trembling with terror !

Fly ! Fly ! Fly ! Fly ! Fly !

The Dead.

Woe, Woe, Woe !

III. Odysseus and the Sirens.

The Companions.

Our sails to the breezes, swift flies the prow,

We leave behind us the shadowy west ;

Soundless, soundless !

Our ears have been stopped, nought to know,

With yielding wax, by Odysseus' behest !

Now sing, oh ye Sirens, your sweet song of yore,

And though ye sang louder than thunder's roar,

We from your wiles shall be scathless !

Odysseus.

The oars are groaning, the billows break,
 The keel flies fast from its silvery wake,
 I stand bound with cables secure to the mast,
 And gaze till yon fair flowery marge we have passed.
 Hark, hear ye the song of the Sirens?

Song of the Sirens.

Come great Odysseus, hero of might,
 Rest the swift oar and tarry !
 If thou wouldst know all earthly delight,
 Here it abides, oh tarry !
 From our lips, through the blissful ages,
 Smilingly flows the wisdom of sages !
 Come and hear our rapturous song !

The Companions.

He hears their song ! He asks us to loose him !

Odysseus.

Oh, ye hard hearted, stay, stay and unloose me !

Song of the Sirens.

Of lofty Troy, and thy island home,
 We'll tell thee what has been, and what will come.
 Come, by our margin tarry !

From our lips, through the blissful ages,
 Smilingly flows the wisdom of sages,
 Come and hear our rapturous song !

The Companions.

He hears their song. he asks us to loose him !

Odysseus.

Oh, ye hard hearted, I pray ye, release me !

The song dies, alas !

[*The song dies in the distance.*]

The Companions.

Row well, companions, heed not his words !

Odysseus.

Oh stay, I entreat ye ! Smite not the waters !

Tarry, oh tarry.

The Companions.

Head not his words. We're safe from danger.

Our prow divides the flashing tide,

And the isle we have passed.

Now sing, oh ye Sirens, your sweet song of yore,

And though ye sang louder than thunder's roar,

We from your wiles shall be scathless !

IV. The Tempest.

Oceanides and Tritons.

Hark ! The storm gathers from afar.

Loud rusheth the blast of the tempest.

Behold the wrathful Poseidon,

Lifting his strong trident aloft !

Roaring winds rise in furious war,

And lash the foam-crested billows.

Loud rusheth the blast of the tempest.

Behold the wrathful Poseidon !

Odysseus.

Wretched, ah, ill-fated am I,
 How can I strive against mighty Poseidon !
 Lo, how the darkening skies lower o'er the waves,
 And the tempest is rising louder and louder.
 My fatal doom is impending !

Oh thrice blessed, ye strong hearted Greeks,
 Who were slain on Troy's warlike field ;
 Had I but fallen on a foeman's spear,
 Here not alone to perish !

Tritons.

Bellow and rage, ye Tritons,
 Bellow with loud thund'rous roar,
 Lightning flashes unveil the darkness around,
 All the storm winds unloosed pour forth o'er the surges.
 Their torrents of wrath.

Oceanides.

Lo, behold where the dark tide is whirling,
 On the crest of the ravening billows rideth
 The sad-eyed daughter of Thebes,
 Leukothea, our fair sister !

Leukothea

Mortal, fear not that the wrath of the god
 Shall prevent thy return or destroy thee,
 Here, spread thou upon thy war-like breast
 This veil that Immortals have woven,
 And thou shalt defy all his terrors.

Odysseus.

Thanks, oh merciful goddess,
 Trusting in thy protection,
 Straight I plunge in the dark briny waters.

Oceanides and Tritons.

Lo, he plunges below in the waters,
 With strong arms he divideth the surges.
 On, Odysseus, we'll bear thee, and guide thee safe.
 On, on, on !
 We'll guide thee safe to yon sheltering island.

Chorus of Female Voices.

Lo, at last, earth-shaking Poseidon calms his anger.

Chorus of Bass Voices.

Far and faint sounds the low-rolling thunder.

Chorus of Alto Voices.

Slow and strong the tide poureth backward.

Full Chorus.

Yonder beckons the wood-crested harbor.
 Thou art in safety !

Chorus of Bass Voices, followed by full Chorus.

Gracious Athene, oh upon his weary eyelids.
 Pour the soothing balm of sleep.

[*Odysseus sleeps.*]

PART II.

V. Penelope Mourning.

Penelope.

Thou far darting Sun, must thy light divine,
 Wake me yet once again?
 At the gates of dreams I was slumbering.

Why have the gods sent me grief without measure?
 I of women the most am bereft,
 And still my woes are increasing.

They first took from me, for fate most inglorious,
 My lord, my consort, true, lion-hearted,
 The chief in virtue among the Achaïans.

And now my son well-belov'd
 Evil tempests have snatched from my side,
 Alas, I know not the hour he went forth to seek
 his dear father.

My soul for his sake is troubled,
 I tremble lest any harm o'er him hath been fated.
 Return thou, my solace, my heart's delight;
 Last pledge of sweet hope to thy mother forlorn!

Oh, Atrytona, daughter of all-subduing Kronion;
 If Odysseus hath e'er burnt in his palace an offering
 to thee,

Oh, now recall his good deed.
 Save my blameless, dear, cherished son,
 From the insolent suitors at home,
 From the threatening tempests yonder.
 Oh, now remember his deeds, Atrytona, save, oh
 save my belov'ed, my only son.
 And thou, Helios, fountain of light,
 Doth thy all-seeing eye in its course still behold,
 My Odysseus a dweller 'mong mortals?
 Graciously lead him with counselling hand.
 Oh to this sorrowing heart restore him,
 Give back its king to this sorrowing land.

VI. Nausikaa.

[*Playing ball and dancing.*]

Nausikaa.

On the flowery mead, girt by the dimpling tide,
 Come, with me toss the ball merrily to and fro.
 Nought doth please the Immortals
 Like a heart that in joy doth bide.

Chorus of Maidens.

Nought doth please the Immortals
 Like a heart that in joy doth bide.

Nausikaa.

Let's delight in our May,
 Youth but an hour will stay,
 Ah, in Autumn sweet pleasure will fade away!
 Have no care for the morrow,
 Seize the fleeting, the blissful day.

Chorus.

Have no care for the morrow,
Seize the fleeting, the blissful day.

Nausikaa.

Crown your tresses with flowers,
Come, twine the mazy dance !

Catch and throw the light ball,
Seize it like winged joy.

Hope soars ever beyond us,
Snatch the pleasure that hovers near us.

Chorus.

Hope soars ever beyond us,
Snatch the pleasure that hovers near.

Odysseus.

Whence these sounds that recall me from the recesses of
slumber?

Lo, on the flowery margin, golden-haired maidens are sporting,
Gloriously led by their queen in the dance.

Thus, pursuing the swift-footed stag,
Artemis, huntress, traverses the hill,
Round her cluster the well-buskin'd nymphs,
She the fairest among them !

Hark to me, queen, or heav'n-dwelling goddess,
Fear and reverence possess me, that I dare not clasp thy knees.
After perils and toils unnumbered,
Here I'm cast by angry seas.
Bend on my sorrows a glance in thy kindness,
Pity a stranger suppliant and helpless,
Oh, have mercy, queen, on my woes !

Nausikaa.

Fly not, my maidens, but tarry here.
 Why do ye tremble?
 None will approach the Phaiakes with hostile intent.
 Dear is our race to th' Immortals,
 He whom you see is poor and a wand'rer;
 Help me to succor his need and to tend him!
 Strangers and beggars are sent us from Zeus,
 Blest is the hand that gives freely.

Nausikaa and Odysseus together.

Strangers and beggars are sent us from Zeus;
 Blest is the hand that gives freely.

Nausikaa.

What a radiance of beauty surrounds him,
 Like to the gods who possess the wide heaven.
 I behold him with amaze!

Chorus of Maidens (TO ODYSSEUS).

Bliss and woe Kronion meteth,
 Just and unjust, all he greeteth,
 High and wondrous are his ways!

Nausikaa and Odysseus together.

Strangers and beggars are sent us from Zeus;
 Blest is the hand that gives freely!

Chorus of Maidens (TO ODYSSEUS).

Bear, then, mortals, steadfastly,
 What the gods have decreed us.
 Come, then, refresh thee with food and sweet wine.

Gather around thee this garment of wool ;
 Follow our chariot, the king thou'lt behold,
 That from suppliant's prayer we turn'd, be not told.

VII. The Banquet with the Phæacians.

Phæacian Nobles.

Be welcome, stranger, to the Phaiakes' land,
 Here is the favored abode of the blessed gods.
 Cast off thy woes, let nought affright thee,

Be welcome, stranger !

Here mirth and heart-stirring song invite thee
 From brooding sorrow this happy land is free ;
 The joyous dance, the strain of the clear-toned harp.
 These the Phaiakes' dower immortal.

Up, then, arouse ye ! Sing, oh Rhapsodes,
 While we pour freely the dark cheering wine !

Song of the Rhapsodes.

Ten years now are past,
 Since glorious Troy
 In the dust was laid !
 Then homeward the host
 Of the Argives turned.
 Oh for the heroes,
 The mighty chiefs
 That lie dead on the plain !
 Beneath the walls
 Of Ilium slain,
 The prey of Fate and of slaughter !

But sadder for those
 Who from death were spared
 When the swift spears were hurled,
 Lonely they roam
 O'er the watery waste,
 Pursued by the vengeful Poseidon's wrath ;
 Agamemnon and Odysseus !
 The one by a treacherous wife was slain,
 When scarce to his hearth was the chief returned.
 Struck down by guile at the banquet !

But, ah Odysseus !
 Where roves his fleet ship,
 Distraught by the angry god?
 By briny surges was he devour'd?
 Or upon the shadowy sea doth he stray,
 With patience and toil, still seeking the home of his fathers !

Nausikaa.

He weeps, the stranger weeps !

Phæacian People.

He weeps, the stranger weeps !

Alkinoos.

Say, oh stranger, why thy sorrow ?

Odysseus.

'Tis I, 'tis I, I am Odysseus !

Phæacian People.

'Tis he, 'tis he, it is Odysseus !

'Tis he, 'tis he, 'tis the chieftain of might !

Of Troy the destroyer ;

Honor and praise to our noble guest !

Odysseus.

I seek no honors, oh friends,

But grant me a safe and speedy escort to my home, oh King.

Nausikaa, Arete, Odysseus and Alkinoos together.

Nowhere abides such delight as in the homestead ;

Sweet the love of parents dear,

Sweet to dwell with wife beloved.

Quartette and Chorus.

Nowhere, nowhere, nowhere,

Abides such delight

As in the love of parents dear,

As 'tis to dwell with wife belov'd.

Odysseus (RAISING HIS BEAKER).

Let me depart, then, unharmed,

Gods who possess the wide heavens,

Prosper and bless thee, oh King,

And thou, white arm'd Queen,

Long may'st thou joy in thy children,

And thy consort, the strong hearted King !

Phæacian People.

The fair shining sails

Their bosoms are spreading,

And far o'er the main

The oars smite the waters
With rhythmical beat !

Lo, soaring aloft,
Like a high-mettled steed,
The ship o'er the purple tide rideth high,
Dividing the foam-crested billows.

And far through the dark, ambrosial night,
Guided secure by the Pleiades' light,
The helmsman is steering the swift-flying keel
That bears from our shores the illustrious chief,
Whose glory is wide as the heavens above,
Oh may he find rest from his sorrow !

VIII. Penelope Weaving a Garment.

Penelope.

This garment by day I weave in my sorrow,
And ravel the web in the still hour of night,
Thus wearying long, yet my tears greet the morrow,
Hope vanishes as the long years take flight.

Where art thou, my husband?
Has bitter fate borne thee down into baleful Hades' abyss?
Or tempest tossed art thou roving upon the wide waved
and billowy sea?

Return, my Odysseus, return, oh my husband !
Come ere this garment my hands shall have wrought ;
The importunate suitors assail thy spouse,

Unjustly despoiling thy son of his birth-right,
 Each day do they dare 'neath thy roof to carouse.
 Return, my Odysseus, my husband !

This garment by day I weave in my sorrow,
 And ravel the web in the still hour of night ;
 Thus wearying long, yet my tears greet the morrow,
 Hope vanishes as the long years take flight.
 Return, return, my Odysseus !

XI. The Return.

The Helmsman.

Noiselessly, gently land, oh companions,
 Lest sweet slumber his eye-lids forsake,
 Before to his home is the hero restored.
 Beneath yonder olive tree tenderly bear him,
 Place beside him his rich store of treasure ;
 And then softly and surely return.

*[The Phæacians carry the sleeping Odysseus on shore,
 return to their ship and sail away.]*

Song of the Boatmen.

(GRADUALLY DYING AWAY IN THE DISTANCE.)

Oh sacred dawn ! Sacred dawn !
 Thou whose hand so benignly
 With crimson doth tint yonder purple tide,
 Oh pour down the dews of thy peace
 On the heart long by sorrow tried !

[Odysseus awakes, but does not recognize his country.]

Odysseus.

Heaven, where am I? What is this land into which, while that I slept, the Phæacians set me ashore? The traitors, deceivers, they have betrayed me! Oh dark clouded Zeus, thou who can'st fathom the spirit's depth, send down on them swift retribution. Woe's me, woe's me! Where shall I bend my steps?

Pallas Athene.

Why art thou mourning? Thou see'st not, Odysseus, that thou standest on thy native soil, that thy own sea-girt Ithaca's round thee?

Lo, where the sheltering harbor extends,
That thou thyself to the sea-god hast hallowed,
See'st thou not yonder the heaven-scaling mountain's brow?
'Tis the wood-bowered Neriton.

Odysseus.

Oh my fatherland, blest remembrance!
Oh let me kiss thee, thou bounteous plain.
Nymphs of these waves, my prayers shall salute ye,
Hail mighty Neriton! Oh can it be such rapture is mine?

Pallas Athene.

Learn, Odysseus, what Pallas Athene came here to reveal.

Odysseus.

What, art thou the celestial Athene?

Pallas Athene.

I am she who guided the battle,
When the murderous spear struck the foeman;

Lending thee succour, I planned thy return.

Know, oh hero,

Strangers are within thy house devising evil ;

They feast and revel in thy palace,

Where they waste thy ample substance,

And thy father's and thy son's.

This day shall thy much woo'd consort

Choose a husband against her will,

And thee, too, by a stratagem,

They have doomed to dark destruction.

But a mist I'll cast around thee,

And thus disguised I'll lead thee forth,

Till the hour of fate has struck,

And to vengeance thou art called.

Odysseus.

Ha, and thus I might have perished,

Struck on my own hearth by impious hands.

Miscreants, woe to ye !

Revenge soon shall o'ertake ye,

Escape in vain !

Like the Thunderer's shaft I will smite ye.

Yea, and though ye were thrice an hundred,

I will destroy ye with ruthless hand !

Be thou gracious, glorious Athene,

Weave my councils, and guide my weapon,

As when Troy's lofty towers we shattered,

 and drew Fate and Black Death on Priam's house !

X. Feast in Ithaca.

The People of Ithaca.

Say, have ye heard yet the tidings of joy?
 Royal Odysseus restored to his people.
 Old and feeble, the crafty chief
 Sought his parental house, now behold him!

See! In might like Apollo the strong bow he bendeth!
 Woe! Black Death and Fate shall befall the
 turbulent suitors,
 Rashly wooing to bitter undoing.
 Rejoice, rejoice!
 Hero victorious, we hail thee!
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!

Penelope.

Hail, oh my husband!
 Oh how blest is this hour to my heart.
 Hail, my hero and guardian.
 Thou, my life and my solace.
 Lo, my fount of tears,
 Flowing through the long years,
 When I was lone and forsaken,
 Now shall be dried.
 Only one last drop I offer,
 That I to joy re-awaken!

Odysseus.

Gracious prudence and light of my dwelling,
 Faithful and well-belov'd Penelopeia,
 Let our joy be a worthy sacrifice offer',

Be a sacrifice offer'd to the Immortals,
 Who in threatening hour filled our bosoms
 With endurance and with their faith divine,
 And now crown our endeavors.

Penelope and Odysseus.

Omnipotent Zeus,
 Thou beneficent Lord,
 We call on thy name !

Thou fair-throned morning,
 When shades wane fast,
 Thou sweet summer dawning
 When winter's past,
 All hail to thy beam,
 Hail, blessed flame !

Final Chorus.

In flames ascending let incense rise,
 To all the gods who our hearths have protected.
 In glory unending they rule in the skies,
 And below in the dark realm of Hades.

Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Rejoice !

Slayer of darkness, be welcome,
 Slayer of darkness, we welcome and hail thee.

Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Rejoice !

May glorious Ithaca long be triumphant,
 Thou hath crowned us with joy, now joy reigns triumphant.
 Slayer of darkness, we hail thee !

In flames ascending let incense rise,
 To all the gods who our hearths have protected.

In glory unending they rule in the skies,
And below in the dark realms of Hades.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice!

Nowhere abides such delight as in the homestead.

Sweet the love of parents dear,
Sweet to dwell with wife belov'd.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Slayer of darkness, we hail thee!

REJOICE! REJOICE!

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